

Practice Illustration

Reasonable Adjustments – Reading and Writing Requirements

Practice scenario

A learner is enrolled into an Individual Support (Home and Community) qualification. After enrolment, the learner disclosed they have severe dyslexia and writing difficulties. The student asks about supports and reasonable adjustments. The trainer and assessor make a time to meet with the student to discuss their support needs.

Better practice response

In preparation, the trainer and assessor meet with the registered training organisation (RTO) compliance officer. They explore the requirements of the qualification and units of competency. They also review their training and assessment strategy for the qualification, and the proposed delivery and assessment methodologies, activities and tasks. They identify any potential barriers and brainstorm a range of strategies that may enable the student to participate. These include:

- providing extra support to the learner (e.g., tutoring)
- changing assessment methods from written to oral
- allowing more time for the learner to complete their assessment tasks
- using assistive technology (e.g., text-to-speech software)
- using more plain English to enhance understanding.

The compliance officer, trainer and assessor analyse the above options. They check the feasibility of each option and consider the potential impacts on the student, other learners and the RTO. The analysis indicates that all adjustments are viable from a cost-benefit analysis. The key issue they identify is the need for some assessment tasks to involve oral rather than written communication. For example, some of the core performance requirements are to:

- *'prepare reports and other documentation according to organisation requirements'*
- *'complete and maintain documentation according to organisation policy and protocols'*

These requirements state the learner must complete workplace documentation. In this scenario, substituting an oral assessment may compromise core unit requirements. This could lead to an insufficient collection of valid evidence and potentially result in non-compliance.

The compliance officer, trainer and assessor meet with the student to discuss options. In the meeting, the student and RTO staff member agree on the following supports and adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments include:

- changing assessment methods from written to oral where workable i.e., when requirements of the unit do not involve written or document-based activities
- allowing extra time for writing and document-production tasks
- using text-to-speech software when required
- allowing the use of electronic devices to complete written and documentation tasks; this includes the use of spelling, grammar and editing tools
- providing materials and resources using the dyslexic font.

Extra supports include:

- checking training and assessment materials and resources use plain English
- providing information about text-to-speech applications; these include both free and paid versions (e.g., Converse Smartly, Microsoft Dictate, Google Docs Voice Typing, Speech Notes, Speech Texter, Dragon Anywhere, Dragon Professional, Otter, Verbit and Amazon Transcribe)
- responding to questions about text clarity i.e., paraphrasing
- providing resources for the learner about potential strategies and practices (e.g., [*Dyslexia Writing & Reading Assistant: Ghotit*](#))
- providing extra feedback and guidance on written and documentation tasks
- asking trainers and assessors to do the [*Dyslexia Awareness: Microsoft course*](#).

The RTO staff member documents the agreed reasonable adjustments in the Student Support/Learning Plan. All parties sign and date the agreement. The trainer and assessor will meet with the student monthly to discuss progress and review the adjustments and supports.

Action and Evidence

This scenario considers a range of supports and reasonable adjustments. There is recognition that a variety of options may work best. There is no 'one size fits all' approach. It demonstrates the importance of 'unpacking and analysing' the requirements in detail and considering whether the assessment is valid, flexible and fair.

The RTO has taken reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to participate in the course or program, and use the facilities and services provided by it, on the same basis as a student without disability, and without experiencing discrimination.

In considering the necessary reasonable adjustments, the RTO has carefully considered the impact of the adjustment on the requirements of the unit of competency, and the benefits for the student. They have also consulted appropriately with the student and industry, and focused on ways to ensure the student with disability can access, use and participate on the same basis as a student without disability. The RTO also ensures the student has access to services and supports that further scaffold their learning opportunity.

Throughout the process, staff members document consultations, advice and any agreements made.

Please note: Every student's particular circumstance will be unique, and the illustration of practice is indicative and offered as guidance only.

[Australian Skills Quality Authority - Self-assurance \(examples of actions and evidence\)](#)

Links to the relevant legislation and standards to meet RTO obligations

[Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\) \(DSE\)](#)

Making reasonable adjustments – Part 3: The Standards require education providers to make reasonable adjustments where necessary. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken by an education provider in relation to applying for enrolment, participating in the course or program, or accessing services and facilities. The education provider must ensure the student with disability can access, use and participate on the same basis as a student without disability. There is no requirement to make unreasonable adjustments.

Standards for Participation – Part 5: The education provider must take reasonable step to ensure that the student is able to participate in the course or program provided by the educational institution, and use the facilities and services provided by it, on the same basis as a student without disability, and without experiencing discrimination.

Standards for curriculum development, accreditation and delivery – Part 6: The education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the course or program is designed in such a way that the student is, or any student with a disability is, able to participate in the learning experiences (including the assessment and certification requirements) of the course or program, and any relevant supplementary course or program, on the same basis as a student without disability, and without experiencing discrimination.

Standards for Student Support Services – Part 7: The education provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to use support services used by the students of the institution in general on the same basis as a student without disability, and without experiencing discrimination. This includes having available internal and external services and supports, informing students of what is available, and providing access to specialised services and supports as necessary.

[Standards for Registered Training Organisations \(RTOs\) 2015 \(Cth\)](#)

Standard 1: The RTO's training and assessment strategies and practices are responsive to industry and learner needs and meet the requirements of training packages and VET accredited courses.

Please note: RTOs registered by the *Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority* or the *Training Accreditation Council Western Australia* may refer to the following websites for requirements specific to you.

[Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority](#)

[Training Accreditation Council Western Australia](#)

Disclaimer

The 'supporting students with disability resources' provide guidance on legislation and policy for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) regarding vocational education and training for students with disability, but they should not be considered legal advice or impose additional legal obligations. RTOs should seek tailored legal advice to understand their specific obligations. More information on this disclaimer can be found at adcet.edu.au/vet/disclaimer or by contacting the [Department of Employment and Workplace Relations](#).